

The Prayer Class

Purpose: *To encourage greater participation and joy in prayer*

The Prayer Class meets in God's Throne Room 24/7

In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence Ephesians 3:12.

Teacher: Abe Funk

Date: July 11, 2024

Lesson: *Pray for All Christians*

Welcome to The Prayer Class:

Dear Jesus, thank you for the Christians who pray for us and encourage us. Please bless these faithful believers and prayer warriors. Help me to be faithful in prayer for others today. Amen.

Bible Reading: Ephesians 6:10-20

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Key Verse: *...always keep on praying for all the saints 18b*

Background and Lesson:

Committed Christians praying is one reason the world isn't in worse condition, and that the Gospel continues to spread to new places. While it does not always seem that our prayers are making a difference, only God knows what could happen if we stopped praying. Our prayers are holding back the forces of darkness. We are called the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Mind you, sometimes Christians are also part of the problem—saints are not always saintly, and there are many who spread false messages or live hypocritical lives. We met two men in the park recently, part of no church, and talking to people. "Women should wear skirts and men should not be wearing shorts, it says so in the Bible," was their message. I told them, "That is not the Gospel."

Paul encourages us, *to be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints*. Prayer is entering a spiritual battle, not against people, but *against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms* 12. We must be armed and battle ready when we pray, and trust the Holy Spirit to help us, verse 18. I pray that prayer at least once each week, and prayerfully dress in each piece of armor God has provided for our protection and to do battle 14-17. Each piece of spiritual armor is essential. Jesus used God's Word to do battle with the devil in Matthew 4. Three times Jesus responded to the devil's temptation with, "It is written..." The devil could not stand up against the Word of God, and finally left Jesus.

We are challenged to *always keep on praying for all the saints* 18b. All genuine believers are saints in God's sight, and all of us need prayer. One third of the world's 8.1 billion people claim some form of Christianity. Many are nominal Christians. They may live in a Christian country, or a Christian family tradition but do not necessarily have personal relationship with Christ. But there are also many new vibrant followers of Jesus all over the world—in every country of the world today. Christianity is the largest religion in the world, and fastest growing religion in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

The Western World is experiencing a decline in attendance and many churches are closing. For these places and these Christians, we need to pray for renewal. Many nominal Christians are turning their backs on their churches, becoming inactive, or as I hear more often, "I love Jesus, but I don't like the church." In some places where Christianity is new and growing, believers face persecution. On average 5- 6, 000 Christians die for their faith each year—we need to pray for courage and safety for them.

Paul requests prayer for himself; *that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel* 19. Pray for pastors, evangelists, missionaries and local church leaders—they all need our prayers! Fewer volunteers are responding to be pastors and missionaries. Seminaries all over North America are in decline. This is not good. We must pray as Jesus instructed his disciples. *"The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."* Matthew 9:37-38

Quote: *The value of consistent prayer is not that he will hear us, but that we will hear him* –W. McGill

Think About This:

Everyone needs and appreciates prayer—it's a gift we can give. Is there someone you could pray for today; perhaps even phone and pray? Phone calls work great for prayer too.

A Prayer for You:

Dear Father, I pray for the one reading this lesson. I ask that you bring peace and joy into this life and use this person to be a blessing to another believer today. Thank you, in Jesus' name, Amen!

My Notes and what To Pray for:

Add your prayer requests here: yourself, family, church family, missionaries, & leaders in government
Note: All Scriptures are from the NIV Bible unless otherwise indicated

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful Colossians 4:2

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